

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

"Cover Me" in Captivity

- Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
III. People, Places, and Environments
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
IX. Global Connections
X. Civic Ideals and Practices
- Grade Level: 9–12 (research and product choices)
- Objectives: The student will:
- Read the documents and adapt information to produce topic products
 - Choose among 10 activities to represent the events of the Iranian Hostage Crisis
 - Share with peers the products created and information learned
 - Use internet research to prepare their product choices
- Time: 1 class period, plus homework or extra time if needed
- Materials: Documents: **1979** *We Are Your Friends*
1979 *UN Security Council Resolution No. 461*
1979 *A Diplomat in Captivity*
- Exercises: "Cover Me" Choices
Cartoon: *Jimmy Carter in Captivity*
- Access to the internet for research:
- <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/diary/1979/d121779t.pdf>
 - <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h2021.html>
 - http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/r_ode/
 - <http://www.nytimes.com/1995/09/11/obituaries/robert-ode-79-oldest-of-hostages-held-by-iran.html>
- Procedures:

Setting the Stage

During the presidency of Jimmy Carter, militant Iranian students seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran, on November 4, 1979.

The crisis began when the exiled Shah became ill and sought medical treatment in the United States. The Carter Administration allowed him to enter on humanitarian grounds and protesters in Tehran eventually seized the Embassy and its staff. In retaliation, President Carter froze all of Iran's financial assets in the United States and the crisis worsened.

Carter tried to rescue the hostages. A special operations team went into Iran on April 24, 1980, but when half of their helicopters malfunctioned (or crashed), the mission was aborted. Eight servicemen died. This was a major embarrassment for the President—especially during an election year—and may have contributed to his defeat in the November election.

The students released 13 of the embassy hostages but 53 others remained in captivity for 444 days—the rest of Carter's term in office. On January 20, 1980, minutes after Ronald Reagan was inaugurated, the long-awaited announcement came at last—the hostages would be released. President Reagan sent Former President Carter to Germany to meet the group that had been held captive for so long.

The crisis had a deep impact on the American public—and its attitudes toward the Islamic world. Several former hostages wrote memoirs. This lesson includes selections from the diary of the oldest hostage, Robert Ode, who was sent to Tehran on a short assignment—just 45 days—before he was scheduled to retire. Ode gave the diary with the story of his ordeal to the Carter Presidential Library. After returning to the United States, Ode did retire. He died in 1995.

Pre Lesson

1. Arrange for the use of the computer lab and/or a wireless cart for your classroom
2. Distribute the documents, *We are your Friends* and *UN Security Council Resolution No. 461*, as homework prior to the lesson day. This will familiarize them with the hostage crisis. Ask the students to look over the President's Daily Diary for Dec. 17, 1979, concerning his visit with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. (You may want to explain that similar minute-by-minute diaries are kept for all presidents.)

<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/diary/1979/d121779t.pdf>

Lesson Day

- 1.** Before students arrive, place the cartoons on each desk.
- 2.** Discuss what they see, as well as how they interpret the drawing. One cartoon is from another country. Discuss that perspective as well.
- 3.** Discuss the content of *UN Security Resolution No. 461*, as well as Prime Minister Thatcher's speech. What was she saying to the United States? What was the purpose of the visit? (Note: This also serves as a homework check to see if they did the reading.)
- 4.** Distribute the diary of Robert Ode and ask the class to read it quietly, taking notes about how Ode and other diplomats were treated.
- 5.** Hand out the exercise, "*Cover Me*" Choices and explain to students that they will be completing two projects based on their selections from this list.
- 6.** Allow students a few minutes to decide which choices they will make to earn the 50 points required.
- 7.** Take the students to the computer lab if you don't have internet access in the classroom. Allow enough time in the lab so that students can complete their project research.
- 8.** Record the choices each student has made and, with student input, determine the project deadline. (Two days should be sufficient.)
- 9.** After the projects are turned in, take a half-lesson to have students share what they found and created. They will receive another 50 points for a full 2-5 minutes of sharing. Total 100 points.
- 10.** The teacher should decide how to use these points. ■